

Polite Contradiction

is terrified even more to hear in than to hear over national TV so strongly believes that the way is to build up," Miss Gross said in an interview after meeting the nt.

Reagan defended his arms policy e podium, and Miss Gross po- contradicted him moments later views on the White House lawn. nt, normally a routine celebra- scholarship, thus amounted to an indirect public disagreement

in a convinced President and an convinced young citizen. trussing the gathering, Mr. Rea- dored the students' "responsi- and right to speak out about your as" and contrasted this freedom e official suppression of dissent

oviet Union. let us always remember, with vilege goes a responsibility to be the President asserted, looking the students as they sat in bright e on the grounds.

No Change of Heart

hearing Mr. Reagan in the pri- eting and at the gathering, Miss ad no second thoughts in urging ent of a freeze.

ue to Washington and lobby this missile," she said, raising ce and facing directly into televi- cameras as reporters clustered her after the President's "We cannot end the possibility

President, obviously alert to the it's intent to press her criticism of cy, used his remarks at the cere- to emphasize that he, too, feared r weapons and had initiated "the far-reaching programs of arms

ow many of you and your friends: home are concerned by the de- ive capability of the world's nu- weapons," the President told the ward winners, 13 of whom joined in Miss Gross's petition.

Hope for Agreement Expressed

pray for the day when nuclear ons will no longer exist anywhere arth," he continued, declaring he ontributed that an agreement could worked out with the Soviet Union

that there must be something wrong with the freeze if it

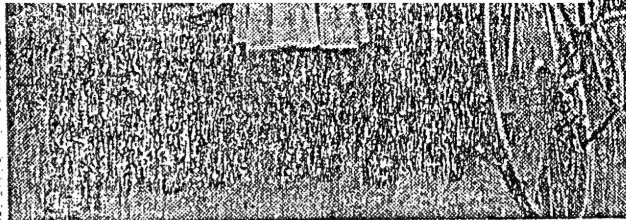
The President

motives, the student said. "He suggested that he as President has access to information that I don't have access to, numbers," she said. "I said numbers are tools, that I have numbers showing that the Soviets have rough parity with us."

Miss Gross was asked whether she believed the Russians would honestly comply with a freeze.

"I believe that we have to give them a chance," said the student. "I believe they have complied very well with all arms controls agreements of verifiability. I think we'd have no trouble verifying a freeze by technical means."

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The New York Times/Terrance McCarthy
A Hmong family outside their apartment in Merced, Calif. Say Pao Moua, his wife, Chong Yang Moua, and their daughter, May Na, and son, Tong, are among 20,000 Hmong refugees estimated to have settled in the area.

tion charge carries a life prison sentence. Mr. Sessions said he recommended a life term, but sentencing of Mr. Knowles was postponed.

The F.B.I. said the two men lured Mr. Donald into their car on the pretext of being shown directions to a bar. A coroner's report said he was dead before his body was hung from the tree.

100 Texans Are Treated In Insecticide Incident

By The Associated Press

More than 100 injured or hysterical people were taken to hospitals after a cloud of insecticide seeped from a greenhouse and settled near university

Laos Hill People Try Yet Again in California Valley

Special to The New York Times

MERCED, Calif. — On the low-rent side of Highway 99 in a two-story apartment complex filled with Asian refugee families, Say Pao Moua spoke of a life in northern Laos where he had three acres of rice paddy and several head of cattle.

"Every night I dream about my cattle," Say Pao Moua, who is 46 years old, said through a translator. "I am homesick. Here I worry about every single thing. In my whole life I have never had as difficult time as here."

Say Pao Moua receives \$601 a month in Government aid to take care of himself, his wife, his 7-year-old daughter and his 2-year-old son. His goal, he says, is to become self-sufficient. But, like the other Hmong refugees who have settled in the last three years in Merced County in the Central Valley, he has a goal that appears a long way off.

The Hmong, also known as the Meo, are a preliterate people who originally came from the hill areas of northern Laos. In 1978, 58,000 of them were welcomed to this country after they cooperated with the United States military forces in Southeast Asia. It is estimated that 20,000 of them, after being initially settled in such places as Rhode Island, Minnesota and Washington, moved to three counties in the Central Valley.

They Sought Warm Climate

According to Hmong community leaders, this shift came about because the Hmong found the warm climate more tolerable than the long winters elsewhere and they wanted to seek self-sufficiency in an agricultural area where they expected a better chance of finding work.

Merced County, of the three counties favored by the Hmong — the others are Joaquin and Fresno

— has been the hardest hit because it has a population of only 146,300 and in March the unemployment rate was 21 percent, not counting the refugees.

According to Fred Wack, the chairman of the County Board of Supervisors, Merced County, in the San Joaquin Valley, is the sixth poorest in California and the preliminary county budget for the next fiscal year shows a deficit of nearly \$10 million.

The county has just completed a outline, drawn up by a subcommittee on the refugees, of services for the refugees to be financed by a Federal grant of \$1 million. Projects to teach vocational English and train the refugees in farming skills are included.

Enough to Fill School, He Says

County officials, however, say that given the scope of the job, the money will be only a drop in the bucket. "The task here is a long process of education, initially on language and job skills and assimilating these people into the mainstream," said Dean Richmond, director of Merced County's Department of Human Resources. "It's going to take the Hmong longer because they are coming from a very simple culture. It's tough, really tough."

"We now have enough young refugee children to fill a school in Merced," he said. "When you begin looking at impacts on public assistance, schools and medical facilities you see a tremendous increase." Mr. Richmond estimated direct government aid for the Hmong at \$5 million a year.

According to county reports, 90 percent of the Hmong are receiving some form of government aid. The county estimates that 90 percent cannot read or write in their own language or speak English. Refugee officials say they are concerned by the vulnerability of the Hmong and their isolation

from the mainstream in an area where members of many minority groups are vying for entry level jobs.

"They are going through all the classic agonies of people who are immigrants, refugees who were transplanted," Mr. Richmond said. However, the Hmong appear especially vulnerable because of the gap between the culture they left and the technological society they now live in.

Dang Moua, a Hmong community leader who spoke some English before coming to the United States, said that the Hmong tended to group together because they felt vulnerable. "When 95 percent of us don't speak English and you send 10 families to Kansas City, how can they survive there?" he asked.

Dang Moua, who came early to the United States and moved to Merced County in 1977 with four other Hmong families, said that one of the major anxieties when they came to this country was "that we may be a scapegoat, one step below other ethnic groups."

They Thought Roads Might Fall

He added that many of the Hmong had moved to Merced for "survival reasons." "We never know about war," he said in English. "Many Hmong thought that if they were in the East or the North and there was a war, the freeways might fold. They wanted to move to an area where the crops are."

According to Bev Morse, a coordinator for refugee services in Merced County, one pressing problem was health care. "They are just not used to Western health care," she said. "They have to overcome a lot of fears and lack of knowledge about this."